

For the good of families, children, and society, I support a constitutional amendment to protect the institution of marriage.

And for the good of our legal system, I will also continue to nominate Federal judges who faithfully interpret the law and do not legislate from the bench. Every judicial nominee deserves an up-or-down vote on the floor of the United States Senate, and I thank you for your strong support of the fairminded jurists I have named to the Federal courts.

Building a more compassionate society also depends on building a culture of life. A compassionate society protects and defends its most vulnerable members at every stage of life. A compassionate society supports the principles of ethical science. When we seek to improve human life, we must always preserve human dignity, so that's why we stand against cloning. A compassionate society rejects partial-birth abortion. And I signed a law to end that brutal practice, and my administration will continue working to defend that law. To advance a culture of life, I was proud to sign the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act.

A compassionate society will not sanction the creation of life only to destroy it. At the White House, I recently met with 21 remarkable families, each of whom either adopted or gave up for adoption frozen embryos that remained after fertility treatments. The children I met confirm our shared belief that America can pursue the tremendous possibilities of science and, at the same time, remain an ethical and compassionate society. With your continued dedication and work, we will continue to build a culture of life in America, and America will be better off for it.

Finally, building a more compassionate society requires that we mobilize our Nation's armies of compassion to help the poor, the sick, and those who hurt. America's faith-based institutions change hearts every day. And we depend on the work of these organizations to bring hope to

harsh places. Yet for too long, the Governments have discriminated against faith-based programs, just because they have a cross or a Star of David or a crescent on the wall. And that's why I signed an Executive order that said that faith-based groups providing social services are entitled to the same access to Federal money as other groups. I am proud that we have now opened billions of dollars in grant money to competition that includes our faith-based charities. For example, my administration awarded College Park Baptist Church in Orlando, Florida, \$5.8 million to build 68 homes for low-income seniors.

Because faith-based groups should never have to forfeit their religious liberty to get Federal dollars—and that's an important concept—we want your help. We want your love, but at the same time, you do not have to forget the mission of faith or ignore the mission of faith that calls you to action in the first place. And that's why the Executive order I signed should be codified into Federal law. Congress needs to pass charitable choice legislation to forever guarantee equal treatment for our faith-based organizations when they compete for Federal funds.

Southern Baptists are the soldiers in the armies of compassion at home and abroad. You're bringing hope to the continent of Africa, and I thank you for that. In Uganda, Southern Baptists have emphasized abstinence and helped as that country reduced the percentage of people infected with HIV by more than two-thirds in less than a decade and a half. In Sudan and other countries across Africa, the Samaritan's Purse ministry provides food and water and medical care and education to suffering people.

Helping Africa is a mission we share. I recently announced \$674 million in emergency humanitarian aid to Africa. We and our African partners have together brought life-saving AIDS treatment to more than 200,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa. We're

on track to meeting a 5-year goal of treating nearly 2 million African adults and children for HIV/AIDS.

Service to others is a long Baptist tradition. One of the most popular hymns in the Baptist hymnal cries out to the Lord, "Thy compassions, they fail not." The compassion of Southern Baptists toward your neighbors in America and around the world has helped heal broken hearts. Where there is despair, you provide hope, and you help those who need love find love. As you work to feed the hungry and provide shelter for the homeless, you are changing America and the world for the better—one heart, one soul, and one conscience at a time.

I've come to your convention via video to thank you for all you do. Thank you for your love for your country. Thank you for your love for your neighbor.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 11:55 a.m. from the Map Room at the White House to the convention meeting in Nashville, TN. In his remarks, he referred to Bobby Welch, president, Southern Baptist Convention.

Remarks at Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant in Lusby, Maryland June 22, 2005

The President. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for letting me interrupt your workday. [Laughter] I hope it's okay. [Laughter] I really appreciate you having me. It's a good—I like to get out of Washington, and I like to pay a visit to our neighbors outside the Beltway. So I appreciate you letting me come by.

Thanks for the tour of this important facility. I want to thank those back at the control room for being so gracious and kind and taking time to explain all the dials and gauges. [Laughter] I can play like I understand what I saw. [Laughter]

But one thing is for certain, that when the people of Maryland flip a switch and see their lights come on, they need to thank the people working here at this plant. This plant is providing a lot of important power for people all over the State of Maryland. I've come to talk about economic security. I've come to talk about the need to get a good energy policy out of the Congress. And there's no better place to do it than right here in Calvert Cliffs. Thanks for letting me come.

Laura didn't come with me. She's out west with our daughter Jenna in the Grand Canyon. How about that? [Laughter] She's doing a great job as the First Lady. She is a fabulous wife and a great mom, and she sends her best to all the good folks who work here at Calvert Cliffs.

I appreciate the Secretary of Energy joining me today. He's a good man. He knows a lot about the subject, you'll be pleased to hear. I was teasing him—he taught at MIT and—do you have a Ph.D.?

Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman. Yes.

The President. Yes, Ph.D. [Laughter] Now I want you to pay careful attention to this. He's the Ph.D., and I'm the C student, but notice who is the adviser and who is the President. [Laughter] He's a good man, and I really appreciate working with Sam to achieve a great national goal, which is become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I appreciate Nils Diaz, who is the Chairman of the NRC, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Thanks for coming. I want to

thank Governor Bob Ehrlich from the great State of Maryland. I appreciate you coming, Governor. Thanks for being here. He's a pro-jobs, pro-growth, pro-small-business Governor. And I enjoy working with him to help create an environment that helps people realize their dreams.

I want to thank George Vanderheyden, who is the site vice president of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. He represents—at least on the tour—represented a lot of the good folks who work here. I want to say something about the folks who work here. I want to thank you for your hard work, and I want to thank you for your patriotism and your love of your country. I understand that six of your fellow employees are now in Iraq. And for the families and the coworkers here, I say: Thank you, on behalf of a grateful nation, for supporting these good folks. These folks are there defeating terrorists who cannot stand the thought of democracy and freedom, defeating them there so we do not have to face them here at home. These folks are there spreading democracy and freedom, understanding that a democratic world is more likely to leave a foundation for peace for our children. So I want to thank you for your sacrifices and thank you for supporting those good folks.

I want to thank the president and the CEO of Constellation Energy, Mayo Shattuck. That's a pretty cool first name, isn't it, Mayo. [*Laughter*] Pass the Mayo. [*Laughter*] His wife, Molly, appreciated that. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Mike Wallace, Skip Bowman. Thank you all. Thanks for letting me come by.

As you know, I'm an optimistic person, and I hope you are as well. These are incredibly hopeful times for our country, and the state of our economy is strong. And Americans from all walks of life have got good reason to be confident about the future of this country. Let me just give you some of the facts. Over the past year, America's economy has grown faster than any major industrialized economy in the

world. In other words, we're leading growth when it comes to major industrialized economies.

Over the past 2 years, America has added more than 3.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is down to 5.1 percent. That's lower than the average rate in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. In Maryland, the unemployment is 4.2 percent. People are working. I'm proud to report that more Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

Our economy is sustaining low inflation rates, low interest rates, and low mortgage rates. Small businesses are flourishing. Families are taking home more of what they earn. Your after-tax incomes are up. More Americans are going to college than at any other time in our Nation's history. More Americans own their own businesses than ever before. And homeownership in America is at an alltime high. This strong and growing economy is lifting our standard of living, and that's important because that means opportunity is being spread throughout the country.

Now listen, I understand parts of our country are still struggling from the effects of the recession and the attacks. I know some workers are concerned about jobs going overseas. I know some are concerned about gaining the skills necessary to compete in the global market that we live in. I know that families are worried about health care and retirement. And I know moms and dads are worried about their children finding good jobs.

See, even though the numbers are still good, there are still worries out there in the country. And these are the challenges of a rapidly changing economy. And we've got the responsibility in Government to take the side of our working families. So we're moving aggressively. We're not taking the good numbers for granted. We're moving aggressively with a pro-growth, pro-worker set of economic policies that'll enhance economic security in the country.